United Nations A/C.3/57/SR.15

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session

Official Records

Distr.: General
4 November 2002

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 15th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 10 October 2002, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Wenaweser ..... (Liechtenstein)
later: Ms. Ahmed (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Sudan)

Contents

Agenda item 100: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*)*

Agenda item 101: International drug control (*continued*)*

Agenda item 102: Advancement of women (*continued*)**

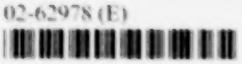
Agenda item 103: Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (*continued*)**

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.
** Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

02-62978 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 100: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/C.3/57/L.2-L.5, L.8 and L.10)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.2 entitled "International cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime: assistance to States in capacity-building with a view to facilitating the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the protocols thereto"

1. **Mr. De Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.2, the Secretary-General was requested to "continue to provide the Centre for International Crime Prevention with the resources necessary to enable it to promote, in an effective manner, the entry into force and implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto". In that connection, it should be recalled that General Assembly resolution 56/254 had approved the appropriation of $5,733,800 for the biennium 2002-2003 under section 14, Crime prevention and criminal justice, to provide, in particular, for the establishment of three new Professional posts and one new General Service post in order to carry out the mandates on the promotion of the ratification and implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

2. The requirements for the work of the Centre for International Crime Prevention for the biennium 2004-2005 in connection with the implementation of the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime would be included in the proposed programme budget for 2004-2005, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session in 2003. In that connection, the attention of the Committee was drawn to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/248, part B, section VI. The Controller and his staff were ready to provide the Committee with all relevant information regarding those procedures.

3. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.2 was adopted*

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.3 entitled "High-level political conference for the purpose of signing the United Nations convention against corruption" and its programme budget implications in document A/C.3/57/L.11

4. **Mr. De Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that he had been authorized by the Budget Division to delete the final sentence of the paragraph 7 of document A/C.3/57/L.11. Therefore there were no programme budget implications in connection with the draft resolution.

5. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.3 was adopted.*

6. **Mr. De Alba** (Mexico) said that his Government welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution and the progress made to date by the Ad Hoc Committee. From the outset, his delegation had taken an active part in the Committee's work and had submitted various proposals designed to move negotiations forward.

7. Mexico was committed to fighting against corruption at both the domestic and international levels, thereby promoting increased transparency, democracy and governmental responsibility.

8. He assured the Committee that Mexico would collaborate closely with the Centre for International Crime Prevention with a view to submitting proposals concerning the organization of the high-level political conference and to providing delegations with the opportunity to discuss the various aspects of the convention.

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.4 entitled "Follow-up to the plans of action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first century"

9. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

10. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.4 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.5 entitled "Preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice"

11. **Mr. De Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in paragraph 6 of A/C.3/57/L.5, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to prepare, in cooperation with the institutes of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme network, a discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings for the Eleventh Congress for the consideration of the Commission, and invited Member States to be actively involved in that process. In that connection, the Secretariat would be preparing a discussion guide for the regional preparatory meetings during the biennium 2002-2003,

which would cost $34,400 and would fall within the framework of the resources available under section 14 of the programme budget.

12. In paragraph 11 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would reiterate its request to the Secretary-General to provide the Centre for International Crime Prevention with the necessary resources, within the overall appropriations of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003, for the preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and to ensure that adequate resources were provided in the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 to support the holding of the Eleventh Congress. In that connection, the Secretariat wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/248, part B, section VI.

13. In paragraph 12, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in the regional preparatory meetings for the Eleventh Congress and in the Eleventh Congress itself, in accordance with past practice. In that connection, it should be noted that the travel expenses of one representative from each of the least developed countries to the Congress and to the regional preparatory meeting held in the region to which each of those countries belonged would be included in the proposed programme budget for 2004-2005.

14. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.5 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.8 entitled "United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders"

15. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications and announced that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia wished to join the sponsors.

16. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.8 was adopted.*

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.10 entitled "Strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity"

17. **Mr. De Barros** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in paragraph 17 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures and provide adequate support to the Centre so as to enable it to promote the speedy entry into force of the Convention and the Protocols thereto, including the organization of a treaty event, in cooperation with the Office of Legal Affairs, in 2003. Assuming that the treaty event would be held in New York, no additional resources would be required during the biennium 2002-2003.

18. **Ms. Borzi Cornacchia** (Italy) announced that Belarus, Colombia, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Iceland, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Peru, the Republic of Moldova, Sri Lanka, Suriname and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

19. **The Chairman** announced that Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cameroon, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

20. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.10 was adopted.*

21. **Mr. Ahluwalia** (India) said that the Secretary-General's report on strengthening the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat (A/57/152) had been considered by the Fifth Committee under agenda item 112. An addendum to that document contained the Chairman's closing summary of proceedings of the symposium entitled "Combating International Terrorism: the Contribution of the United Nations", held in Vienna on 3 and 4 June 2002.

22. At an intersessional meeting of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held on 12 July 2002, it had been agreed that the summary would be considered in informal consultations between the Secretariat and the concerned States and that a consensus text would be transmitted to the Secretariat in New York for issue. However, the summary had been erroneously transmitted to New York and although a corrigendum had been promised it had not yet appeared. Therefore, India wished to disssociate itself from paragraph 5 of A/57/152 and paragraph 28 of A/57/153 until the corrigendum was issued. Nevertheless, his delegation wished to reiterate its firm support for the activities of the Centre for International Crime Prevention, in particular the Terrorism Prevention Branch.

23. **The Chairman** suggested that the Committee should recommend that the General Assembly should take note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Preparations for the Eleventh Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice" (A/57/154) and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Prevention of corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin" (A/57/158 and Add.1 and 2).

24. *It was so decided.*

Agenda item 101: International drug control (*continued*) (A/C.3/57/L.9)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.9 entitled "International cooperation against the world drug problem"

25. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

26. **Mr. De Alba** (Mexico) announced that Belarus, Botswana, Georgia, Guinea, Jamaica, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mongolia, the Republic of Moldova, Sri Lanka, Saint Lucia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia and Zambia wished to join the list of sponsors.

27. **The Chairman** announced that Benin, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, the Gambia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Suriname, Switzerland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

28. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.9 was adopted.*

Agenda item 102: Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/57/3, A/57/38 (Part I), A/57/125, A/57/129-E/2002/77, A/57/169, 170, 171, 330 and Add.1, 406, 432 and 447)

Agenda item 103: Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (*continued*) (A/57/3 and A/57/286)

29. **Mr. Ahluwalia** (India) said that empowerment of women, both economically and socially, had consistently received priority attention at all levels in India. The national policy for the empowerment of women, adopted in 2001, sought to address the gaps between their de jure and de facto position, and to mainstream a gender perspective into all laws, policies and programmes. One third of electoral seats were reserved for women, and the heads of local government alternated between men and women.

30. On the issue of the elimination of crimes against women committed in the name of honour, reference had been made to reports of so-called "honour killings" taking place in India. He stated firmly that the practice of "honour killing" did not exist in India, and that the Government would bring any perpetrator of such a crime to justice.

31. The critical situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was the responsibility of all Member States, which must come together to ensure that the institution did not flounder.

32. In the report of the Secretary-General on trafficking in women and girls (A/57/170), an erroneous and misleading reference had been made to the work of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in ensuring that the issue of trafficking was recognized in India. Under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act of 1956, trafficking in human beings was prohibited. United Nations agencies, especially small ones, must be cautioned against excessive activism in advocacy when they could not match their aspirations with any resource commitments, for the tasks of their mandates for large countries like India, thus affecting their own credibility. Trafficking in women and children was a global phenomenon with transnational implications. While national efforts to eliminate it were essential, greater cooperation among nations was called for. The protocol to the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on trafficking in persons was expected to reinforce national efforts to address that problem.

33. His delegation welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system and urged greater efforts to meet the targets. The remedy for the situation should be found from within the system, and he called on the Secretary-General to take a pro-active approach.

34. Violence against women did not respect geographical or historical boundaries. That affliction must be removed from the world map, through

increased sensitivity, action and advocacy at the national level and increased international cooperation.

35. **Ms. Erotokritou** (Cyprus) said that her delegation aligned itself with the statement of the European Union. Cyprus remained fully committed to fighting any kind of gender discrimination by pursuing policies designed to lead to a gender-sensitive and educated society. Since its ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, her Government had formulated a comprehensive legal framework and mechanisms for the implementation of the commitments under that Convention. The national machinery for women played a key role in all attempts to integrate a gender perspective into social and political life.

36. As part of the process of harmonizing its social legislation with that of the European Union, it had drafted a law on equal opportunity and treatment in employment. It had also implemented an innovative scheme for strengthening women's entrepreneurial activities by funding projects in manufacturing, trade and tourism. In addition, the recently established Women's Cooperative Bank helped to provide access to finance and credit. As part of the gender mainstreaming approach, government departments and the national machinery for women cooperated closely with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions. As part of that cooperation, an international conference on violence in the family had been organized in November 2000.

37. The women of Cyprus, who had been experiencing the tragic consequences of invasion for 28 years, were particularly sensitive to matters of human rights and peace. The women's movement had been very active over the years in protesting the illegal occupation and in encouraging a culture of peace and reconciliation. Cyprus attached great importance to achieving gender equality for all its citizens, and deeply regretted that, owing to the 1974 invasion, Cypriot women remained divided. The Government could not apply the provisions of international conventions to the women living in the occupied area. All women in Cyprus, however, had cooperated closely in pursuit of their common goal of a reunited Cyprus and membership in the European Union. Her delegation hoped that the barriers imposed by the forces of occupation and division would soon be lifted, thereby allowing all Cypriot women to enjoy their rights equally and contribute to the struggle to promote human dignity and development.

38. **Mr. Gansukh** (Mongolia) said that his delegation shared the view that the advancement of women was a cross-cutting issue closely linked with many other challenges, including poverty alleviation, literacy, health care, sustainable development, peace and democracy. His delegation believed that the promotion of literacy should be placed at the heart of efforts for the advancement of women. Education was paramount among means of achieving gender equality and empowerment of women. The forthcoming United Nations Literacy Decade would open a window for change and give further impetus to the commitments of the World Education Forum, held at Dakar, Senegal, in April 2000 and the Millennium Summit.

39. Women's participation in political life and democracy was growing very slowly, and many countries had introduced quotas for representation in the legislature, along with voluntary targets adopted by political parties. That issue would be included in the agenda of the Fifth International Conference of New and Restored Democracies, to be held in Mongolia in 2003. Mongolia also attached great importance to the work of INSTRAW and believed that the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group (A/57/330 and Add.1) were crucial to the long-term viability of the Institute.

40. The challenges faced by Mongolian women were complex and inter-related, and in order to meet those challenges the Government had worked in close cooperation with the main actors in society to form a genuine partnership between men and women, the public and private sectors and civil society. He underlined the importance Mongolia attached to its cooperation with the United Nations system in developing and strengthening national capacity on gender issues.

41. **Ms. Ward** (New Zealand), speaking also on behalf of Australia and Canada, said that women's equal participation played a pivotal role in the advancement of women, and therefore it was essential to ensure that women were appropriately represented in an important global institution such as the United Nations. In order for the Organization to reflect the needs and aspirations of more than half the world's population, women must be able to participate equally

and actively across the full range of its policy-making and operational departments and agencies.

42. Regrettably, there had not been a significant increase in the representation of women in the Secretariat and other organizations of the United Nations system. The goal of 50/50 gender distribution had not been achieved. Only four of the 24 departments and offices of the Secretariat had reached that goal and further determined efforts were needed. The three delegations commended the efforts of the Secretary-General, particularly as reflected in the new staff selection system, which had established gender targets and promoted greater accountability among departmental heads.

43. It was critical that all departments and agencies should consider the gender implications of their policies, programmes and activities, and the three delegations welcomed the increased level of coordination, particularly through the United Nations human rights system, to ensure that gender issues were integrated into its work.

44. With regard to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, Australia, Canada and New Zealand shared the Council's concern about the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, including refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as the particular needs of female ex-combatants in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Because of the significant role women played in preventing conflicts and in peace-building, the three delegations urged the Secretary-General to expand women's involvement in peacekeeping operations and to ensure a gender perspective in conflict resolution.

45. Violence against women was an obstacle to the achievement of gender equality. States must continue to adopt appropriate measures, particularly through legislation and education, to eradicate violence and promote respect for women. The three delegations were pleased that the human rights of women and the elimination of violence would be a key theme of the forthcoming session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

46. They reiterated their fundamental support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and urged all States to ratify or accede to it, along with its Optional Protocol, and to strive to fulfil their obligations. By doing so, they would be contributing to an improved world not just for women, but for all of society.

47. **Mr. Nguma** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that his Government remained committed to the goal of gender equality, and had taken affirmative action to increase the number of women in decision-making positions by 30 per cent by the year 2005. To that end, voter education programmes had been conducted before the 2000 elections to prepare women, and as a result the number of women members of Parliament had increased to 22 per cent. The increases in the number of women in other areas of government had been gradual, but progress had been steady and consistent, demonstrating the resolve of his Government to ensure gender balance at all levels and fulfil its international commitments.

48. In recognition that education was a basic right of every child and a necessity for social and economic development, the Government had committed itself to providing basic education to every child, and to ensure gender equality through a focus on the girl child. Poverty eradication continued to be a challenge, and the Government was meeting it by providing micro-credit to women entrepreneurs. His delegation paid tribute to the Division for the Advancement of Women and UNIFEM and their crucial role in reinforcing national capacity in a number of areas, including human rights, gender-responsive budgeting and the elimination of violence against women.

49. His delegation welcomed the continued efforts of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in promoting gender mainstreaming, and applauded the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of a regular sub-item on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. His Government was fully convinced that gender equality was possible. He agreed with the recent statement that the most significant change in the past 30 years had not been a technical innovation like the personal computer or the ideological shift converting most of the world to capitalism, but rather the end, or at least the beginning of the end, of discrimination against women.

50. **Miss Al-Sabah** (Kuwait) praised the Secretary-General's report on the elimination of all forms of violence against women (A/57/171), and affirmed that her country endorsed the recommendations contained therein.

51. In keeping with the importance of women's role in society, the Constitution stated that all human beings enjoyed equal dignity and were equal before the law with regard to rights and public duties. Furthermore, Kuwait had become a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

52. Kuwaiti women enjoyed full economic rights and could be promoted to higher positions. The Constitution guaranteed the right of all Kuwaitis to work and the right to ply any lawful trade, while allowing women to practise unhindered all lawful voluntary social activities. Kuwaiti women held many leadership positions, whether as a university dean, a deputy minister, or ambassador. In 1999, about 11 per cent of prominent positions were held by women.

53. With regard to "honour killing", her delegation considered that draft resolutions should not target specific countries or civilizations and should not be selective with regard to crimes committed against women, but should address all crimes committed against them.

54. Women everywhere still suffered from discrimination, violence and persecution as a result of wars and political disputes. In that regard, there were still Kuwaiti women prisoners unaccounted for, and Palestinian women were still suffering under the Israeli occupation of Arab lands.

55. **Mr. Valdes** (Chile) said he wished to draw attention to two aspects of the Beijing Platform for Action: violence against women, particularly domestic violence, and the feminization of poverty.

56. Chile had addressed the problem of family violence through national policy emphasizing prevention and care for the victims from an intersectoral standpoint. As part of its major effort to raise awareness and educate, it had conducted a media campaign entitled "Don't let violence strike your spouse". In addition, it had instituted a policy of comprehensive care for women victims of violence, men who inflicted it and children who witnessed it, along with a programme to train teachers and introduce the issue into the school curriculum.

57. On the subject of the feminization of poverty, his Government had made a firm commitment to eradicate extreme poverty, and the percentage of women living in poverty had dropped from 26 per cent in 1990 to 15 per cent in 2000. However, there was concern at the gradual increase in households headed by women, which by definition had lower incomes than those headed by men. The Government had responded with a job training initiative to improve the quality of life for women heads of households, and with a system of direct financial benefits targeted to the poorest families. Some challenges remained, including better coordination of the budget allocations for the public services concerned, greater involvement of the business sector and help for women to enter non-traditional job fields.

58. With regard to the situation of women in Afghanistan, despite recent changes, the basic principles of human rights were still far from being respected. His delegation once again urged the Afghan authorities to make every effort to promote full respect for the human rights of women to enable them to participate in the rebuilding of a prosperous and just nation that was able to preserve its rich cultural and religious heritage.

59. **Ms. Sonaike** (Nigeria) said that her Government was committed to reducing gender inequality and enhancing the status of women in all areas. The Ministry of Women's Affairs was collaborating with local institutions, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to that end, including to ensure gender mainstreaming and to promote affirmative action in economics policies and decision-making. Some 33 per cent of ministerial and other high-level government posts in Nigeria were reserved for women, with women participating in local government and as legislators. A National Committee on Women in Politics had recently been established to further enhance their participation.

60. Efforts under way in Nigeria to address all forms of violence against women included policy, legal and institutional reforms. There was a special focus on trafficking and sexual exploitation, with international cooperation. Harmful traditional and religious practices continued to be combated by the Government, including through awareness-raising initiatives for law-enforcement personnel, the judiciary and the media. New legislation had also been enacted to prohibit female genital mutilation.

61. Despite international commitment to development, more than half of humanity still lived in abject poverty, a primary cause of violence against

women. The negative impact of globalization, HIV/AIDS and other diseases further diverted scarce resources. Moreover, the reticence of donor countries to meet agreed official development assistance targets risked compromising attainment of the Millennium development goals, with implications for the lives of women and children everywhere.

62. Her delegation wished to pay tribute to the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and UNIFEM. It supported the revitalization and strengthening of INSTRAW, which had also been effective in promoting the Beijing goals.

63. **Ms. Aristaputri** (Indonesia) said that women had a crucial role to play in development; to disregard women's issues was thus to squander one half of the world's human resources. Her Government had taken steps to mainstream gender issues through the enactment and enforcement of relevant legislation and wished to encourage other States to follow suit. Gender equality was clearly a means of fostering economic and social development, and investing in the development of women and girls was one of the most cost-effective ways to promote productivity and sustained growth. The poorest countries, however, required outside assistance to that end.

64. Cooperation was required at the global and regional levels to combat trafficking in women and girls, a phenomenon of deep concern to her delegation. Indeed, both States of origin and destination must increase efforts to reduce trafficking, protect trafficked women and prosecute traffickers. Indonesia was strengthening its national legislation and law enforcement capacities to that end and was working with non-governmental organizations to develop appropriate institutional mechanisms and to strengthen data collection. The State Minister for the Empowerment of Women was constantly seeking to raise public awareness of the issue.

65. *Ms. Ahmed (Sudan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

66. **Mr. Unaibayev** (Kazakhstan) said that his Government was committed to making the Beijing goals and the outcome of the twenty-third special session instruments for action at all levels, with a view to achieving real equality. It supported United Nations efforts to that end. The establishment of appropriate indicators for tracking progress was clearly in order.

67. The Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, inter alia, were playing an important role in promoting gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system. His delegation also wished to pay particular tribute to the Special Adviser for advocating attention to the situation of women in the development of a strategic recovery plan for Afghanistan.

68. The advancement of women and the protection of their rights being priorities for his Government, effective mechanisms were being developed to increase women's integration into social and political life. There were now more than 150 women's non-governmental organizations in Kazakhstan, the creation of an appropriate legislative basis having stimulated the development of a civil society in Kazakhstan.

69. Microcredit for women's small and medium-sized enterprises was important for enhancing the social and economic impact of the financial sector as a whole. Since 1998, 40,000 microcredit programmes had been launched in the country, with rural women accounting for some two thirds of beneficiaries. For the first time, the State budget for 2002 also included an allocation to support women's enterprises.

70. Much remained to be done to further improve the situation of women in Kazakhstan, in particular to ensure their equal participation in decision-making, to maximize their access to credit and land and to promote their entry into the oil and gas industry. There was also a need to continue incorporating gender indicators in all State plans and programmes and to provide State support for non-governmental organizations dealing with women's and family issues.

71. **Ms. Thong** (Cambodia) said that, since violence against women and trafficking transcended geography and nationality, it required a concerted international response. Member States should continue to improve national mechanisms for tackling those phenomena, including by incorporating the relevant international legal standards into national legislation.

72. The Constitution of Cambodia stipulated equal rights for women and men. In 1988, a female Minister for Women's Affairs had been appointed to increase the prominence of women's issues. A five-year plan currently being implemented included a nationwide effort to assess the status of women's rights and to

devise mechanisms for involving women in all levels of decision-making. The priority areas were education, reproductive health, economic empowerment and legal protection.

73. The Ministry for Women's Affairs had also launched a campaign with the aim of combating all forms of violence against women and protecting women's rights. Effective measures to eliminate all kinds of discrimination against women and enable them to play a more significant role in the revitalization of the national economy had also been enforced. In addition, a National Council for Women had been established to raise awareness of women's issues and to further the national programme of action, with the Queen and the Prime Minister as its honorary president and vice-president.

74. Much remained to be done at the national level to achieve the Beijing goals. Cambodia looked forward to receiving substantial assistance to enable it to overcome prevailing poverty and to provide a better standard of living for women and children.

75. **Ms. Fleming** (World Bank) said that, in the wake of the Beijing Conference, it had become clear that gender equality was indispensable to fulfilling the international development mandate. Gender-based inequalities hampered economic growth and poverty reduction efforts. While women and girls bore the brunt of gender inequalities, it was the whole of society that suffered. Helping women and men to become equal partners in development and giving them an equal voice and equal access to resources were also, however, important development objectives in themselves. Clearly, ignoring gender disparities came at a great cost to a population's well-being, to a country's ability to grow and govern, to the effectiveness of development assistance and to sustainable poverty reduction.

76. A gender-sensitive approach was necessary to the achievement of all the millennium development goals, which were mutually reinforcing. The World Bank was currently focusing on the attainment of those goals, determined to ensure that gender equality was put at the heart of its poverty eradication efforts. A gender-mainstreaming strategy launched the previous year required the Bank to work alongside Governments, civil society and other donors to diagnose gender-related barriers and opportunities for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Building on the Monterrey Consensus, the Bank had also launched a special initiative on gender and macroeconomic policy. The international community must now move from rhetoric to implementation, wisely prioritize, and ensure that the people it intended to help were kept at the forefront.

Statements in exercise of the right of reply

77. **Mr. Tamir** (Israel) said that he wished to respond to the statement made by Lebanon at the 13th meeting on the items before the Committee, in particular to the accusation that Israel was occupying Lebanese territory. Israel had made a full withdrawal from Lebanon on 24 May 2000 in compliance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), as had been confirmed by the Secretary-General and the Security Council. Lebanon had yet to fulfil its obligations under the resolution by ensuring the return of its effective authority in the areas. If indeed Lebanon was occupied, it was not by Israel. Lebanon was ruled by another neighbouring country.

78. With regard to the Lebanese delegation's affirmation that the activist Leila Khaled continued to play a constructive role in the Middle East peace process, it should be noted that she had joined the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1968 and had hijacked a plane on its way to Tel Aviv in 1969. In 1970, she had attempted to hijack a plane heading for London and had been captured by United Kingdom authorities, only to be released three days later in a prisoner exchange. In an appearance on Al-Jazeera Television on 4 February 2002, she had insisted that women were entitled to participate in suicide bombings in Israel. It was sad that such figures continued to be held up as models of good citizenship.

79. **Mr. Malouf** (Lebanon) said that he could only reiterate that the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon had not been completed. It had taken Israel 22 years to comply only partially with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), with parts of Lebanon still under Israeli occupation. Many terrorist acts were also being committed in Lebanese territory at the hands of Israel, and Lebanese air space was violated on a daily basis. It was enough to watch television or read the newspapers to appreciate the extent of the occupation. His delegation took exception to Israel's claim that Lebanon was being occupied by another country. Lebanon was free to choose its friends. Special

relations with a particular country did not constitute an occupation.

80. **Mr. Tamir** (Israel) said that Hizbullah — one of the cruellest international terrorist organizations — had been operating freely in southern Lebanon for over 15 years and had continued to do so following Israel's withdrawal. In a particularly conspicuous incident on 7 October 2000, it had crossed the border and kidnapped three Israeli soldiers and one civilian, all of whom continued to be held hostage.

81. **Mr. Malouf** (Lebanon) said he wished to recall that Hizbullah was considered a freedom movement for resistance against the occupation. Hizbullah had representatives in Parliament and participated actively in the political life of the country. The three soldiers in question had been taken prisoner on the Shaba farms, which were in Lebanese territory; therefore, Hizbullah had not crossed the border.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.